

REMARKS

Careful consideration has been given to the Official Action of October 8, 2004 and reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Official Action of October 8, 2004 indicates that it is responsive to communication filed on March 1, 2004. It is requested that the Supplemental Amendment transmitted on March 25, 2004 be acknowledged by the Examiner. The present Amendment includes changes with respect to the Supplemental Amendment of March 25, 2004.

The allowance of claims 1, 5, 8-21, and 24-34 is noted with appreciation.

Claims 35-37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Wolter.

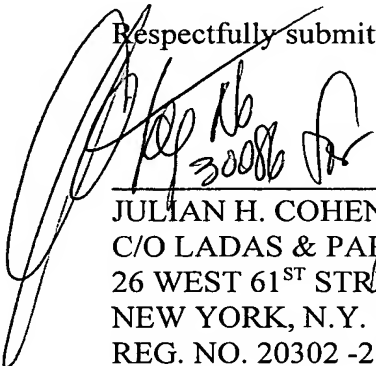
In order to clearly distinguish the claims from Wolter, claim 36 has been incorporated into claim 35. Claim 37 remains dependent on claim 35.

Wolter discloses a cover plate with a partial groove in its lower surface. The groove is rectangular as shown at 45 in Fig. 10. However, the groove is confined within the plate as shown in Figs. 1 and 2. The plate itself is a cover plate which covers the head of the bone screw. The cover plate acts in combination with an underlying bone plate 1 which receives the bone screws. The cover plate is secured to the bone plate by screws 9 fitted in holes 6 in the cover plate. The cover plate is provided with passages at its lower sequence (45 in Fig. 10) which serve for angular fixing of the cover plate with respect to the bone plate (Column 4, lines 1-3). In the embodiment in Fig. 10, the groove 45 is annular (Column 5, lines 47-50) to

engage the spherical head of the pin and prevent angulation of the cover plate.

In contrast, the plate of the invention is itself secured to the bone structure by a lone screw which passes through an opening in the plate. Furthermore, the groove extends partially in the thickness of the plate and extends to an edge of the plate at which the groove opens outwards of the plate thereby forming a slot enabling the end of the pin to enter the slot when the plate is slidably advanced on the bone structure as evident from Figs. 2 and 3 and Figs. 4 and 5. The plate structure of the invention is therefore clearly distinguished from Wolter and serves an entirely different purpose.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 35 and 37 are now in allowable condition and favorable reconsideration is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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